

Serial No.: 09/855,374
Inventor(s): Ramesh Keshavaraj

U.S. PTO Customer No. 25280
Case No.: 2086B

REMARKS

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Claims 1-8 are currently pending in the application. Currently, all of the claims are under rejection. In the Office Action dated January 3, 2007 rejection of the claims 1-8 was maintained for anticipation as follows:

- (1) under 102(b) as to EP 0 794 090 A1 ("Morton");
- (2) under 102(b) as to US 6,168,203 ("Amamori"); and
- (3) under 102(b) as to US 4,944,529 ("Backhaus").

Applicant traverses this rejection, as to each reference.

In the Office Action, it is stated that the term "substantially rectangular" is "so broad in scope that any polygon which comes "close in shape" to a quadrilateral would read on the language "substantially rectangular". Applicant disagrees. It is believed that "substantially rectangular" is clear and precise, and that a rectangle is believed to be a geometrical subset species of the larger genus of "quadrilaterals". Applicant is not claiming a quadrilateral, applicant is claiming a substantially rectangular shaped first blank.

Even as applicant disagrees with the previous rejection of the claims, applicant now, in response to the Office Action, has further amended the claims 1 and 5 to make it even more clear that the invention is not disclosed by any of the cited prior art references. Applicant has further provided in its newly amended claim 1 additional clarifying language that the airbag cushion of the invention comprises a first fabric blank of substantially rectangular shape and having a pair of opposed and substantially straight sides. Furthermore, as claimed, the blank has a second pair of opposed and substantially straight sides. The first pair of sides are substantially parallel. Likewise, the second pair of sides are substantially parallel to each other as well. The first pair of sides are oriented perpendicularly in relation to the second pair of sides. The airbag cushion also comprises a second fabric blank connected to the first fabric blank through at least one seam. Other claims 2-8 contain by their dependency similar claim limitations for the airbag cushion of the invention.

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The specification fully supports these claim amendments as Figures 1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 16 17, 19, 22, 23, 24 and 25 illustrate the airbag cushion having the characteristics as now claimed. The Figures illustrate a substantially rectangular blank or front panel 24 (see also 124, 224, 226 in other embodiments). It is apparent from the illustrations that the first fabric blank is of substantially rectangular shape and includes a pair of opposed and substantially straight sides (sides are clearly shown but not separately numbered in the Figures). Further, each of these blanks has a second pair of opposed and substantially straight sides, as clearly shown in the Figures. The first pair of sides are substantially parallel to each other, which is clear from the illustrated Figures. Likewise, the second pair of sides are substantially parallel to each other, as shown in the Figures. The first pair of sides are oriented perpendicular in relation to the second pair of sides, which is consistent with a rectangular shape, and is apparent in the illustrated Figures. In summary, the description and illustration afforded to the claims is fully supported for purposes of 35 USC section 112 by way of both the specification and Figures of the application as filed in the Patent Office.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated Morton. Each element of the claimed invention is not disclosed by Morton. Morton discloses piece 42 with elongated members having inner and outer longitudinal ends 28 and 30 and first and second lateral ends 44 and 46. See Figures 2-3. The panels shown in Morton are not in the shape of a rectangle as claimed in this invention. The ends 28 and 30 are not substantially straight, but instead are curved. Morton describes the "curved portions" at column 4, line 44. Further, the lateral ends 44 and 46 are not substantially parallel. Thus, the Morton device does not meet the elements of the claimed invention, and as such the claims 1-8 are not anticipated by Morton. Therefore, it is requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,168,203 to Amamori. Amamori is directed to an airbag made from two irregularly shaped panels. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a fabric blank that is substantially rectangular in shape. At column 2, lines 20-40 is clear that Amamori contemplates and discloses the use of a trapezoidally shaped panel. See also

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Figures. Amamori does not anticipate the claimed invention, because it does not disclose the claimed invention of a rectangular panel. Amamori does not disclose a first fabric blank of substantially rectangular shape and having a pair of opposed and substantially straight sides. Further, Amamori does not show a second pair of opposed and substantially straight sides. The sides of the Amamori panels are irregular and not substantially parallel, forming at best a roughly trapezoid-shaped polygon — and certainly not a rectangle. Further, the sides are not substantially straight, due in part to protrusions 6a and 6b. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the claims 1-8 of the rejection be withdrawn, as this reference does not anticipate claims 1-8 of this application.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,944,529 to Backhaus. Backhaus does not disclose the invention. The preferred Backhaus embodiment set forth in Figs. 2-5 and Col. 3, line 65- Col. 4, lines 55 describes an airbag made from a single rectangular panel that is folded over on itself to form an airbag. There is not a teaching of a second panel such as that set forth in the instant claims. Other embodiments of Backhaus show trapezoidal shaped panels in Figs. 6-14. Backhaus does not teach or disclose the claimed invention, in part because it does suggest or show a rectangular panel. Backhaus does not disclose a first fabric blank of substantially rectangular shape and having a pair of opposed and substantially straight and parallel sides. Backhaus does not show a second pair of opposed and substantially straight and parallel sides on the panel. As shown in Figure 7 of Backhaus, two trapezoidal impact surfaces 18 and 16 are employed. The sides of the disclosed panels in Backhaus are irregular and not parallel, forming at best a rough trapezoid — clearly not a rectangle. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the claims 1-8 of the rejection be withdrawn, as this reference does not anticipate claims 1-8 of this application.

To sustain a rejection under Section 102(b), all of the elements must be disclosed in a single prior art reference, and the elements must be arranged as required by the claim. Here there is no such teaching of the claimed invention, by any of these three references. Therefore, it is requested that the rejection be withdrawn, and the

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claims be advanced to allowance.

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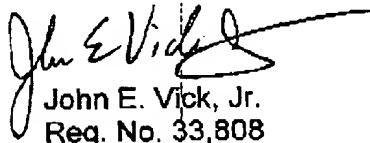
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CONCLUSION

The claims are in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is requested. Should the Examiner find that any issues remain outstanding following consideration of this Amendment, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to resolve the issue.

Respectfully submitted,


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